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EXTEND THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The brethren everywhere are remarkable for their loving zeal for the Lord, His Truth and the brethren. In no way is this better shown than in what we term the Volunteer Work-- the voluntary distribution of the Society's free literature. No other Society on earth ever manifested so much self-denying zeal in such a manner. We feel disinclined to advise any increase along this line. Nevertheless, it is ours to offer suggestions and indicate possibilities and supply the free literature, and yours, dear brethren, to determine the extent of your reasonable and possible service for the King of kings. We do know that there are millions of people in our home land who have never yet had a taste of the spiritual food, "meat in due season," which has so greatly refreshed and strengthened us. Hundreds of cities and towns and villages have received no volunteer attention. It is for you to decide, individually and as classes, what you can do for these. One of our very best free papers has been widely

distributed except in such places as suggested. It contains a most interesting article on "The True Basis for Human Equality," another on "Battering Down the Walls of Hell," and another showing that neither Pastor Russell nor the I.B.S.A. taught "The End of the World in 1914," but on the contrary that "the earth abideth forever."

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CLERICAL CONSPIRACY LITERATURE

In various quarters the Adversary is stirring up opposition by the publication of the slanderous statements which, as our readers know, have been answered long ago. We advise that when such an attack is made our friends meet it quickly, if possible, in the next issue of the daily press. Do not render slander for slander, but calmly, kindly point out the unscriptural course. Remind the transgressor of the golden rule and of the Divine command, "Speak evil of no man." Remind the public that evil speaking has for centuries been the method of those worsted in argument. Amongst those slandered was our Savior Himself; slandered as a friend of publicans and harlots; charged with being a glutton and wine bibber, and called the prince of devils. And so it has been with many of His followers since. Assert your better acquaintance with the facts and offer to anyone interested true particulars.

Then, while the subject is warm, embrace the opportunity for extensive Volunteer work. We have one number of the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY

which, besides other valuable articles, contains one under the title, "A Clerical Conspiracy to Injure Pastor Russell." This article discusses the various slanders briefly and to the point; and if anybody is interested further we can supply other printed matter giving details in full. However, almost universally this one little tract sets the matter straight and convinces the people that the clergy are really fighting the Truth of the Bible which they cannot answer. In writing for this number designate it "The Conspiracy Special." We will have them in good supply and make prompt shipments free of all charge on receipt of letters or telegrams.

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THE COLPORTEUR SERVICE

The immense crops of wheat, corn and oats, together with the extraordinary prices at which they are selling, should inure to the "Harvest Work." Colporteurs in the grain-producing districts should be doing wonderfully well. Nothing should be allowed to hinder the most important work on earth.

Colporteurs in less favored localities, finding work impossible, should seek to follow this lead to fields more favorable.

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PRESENT DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF THE SAINTS

"Cry aloud and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the House of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God."--`**Isaiah 58:1,2**`.

WE understand that the Lord, through the Prophet Isaiah, is here describing the condition of the nominal people of God. These words probably had an application in the Prophet's day, but we think they have a special application in our day. If we should view the words as a general statement, applicable at any time, it would seem to have reference to some who are truly the Lord's people and also to the House of Jacob in general. The Prophet speaks of certain transgressions of God's people, **errors,** and of **sins** of the House of Jacob (Natural Israel)--especially **grievous** transgressions.

Applying this to the present day, we would understand that the Lord's people are those who are in covenant relationship with God, His real people, and no others. Those in covenant relationship with God are comparatively a small number. The great mass of professed people of God have gotten into many transgressions of the Divine will and Law, many of them quite ignorantly following blind leaders of the blind, following creeds of the darker past. The term "the House of Jacob," however, is a distinguishing term, referring exclusively to the Jews, God's ancient Covenant people.

The Lord's people of the present time, those who have the Light of Truth as it now shines out from His Word, should, as they have suitable opportunity, point out to Christendom of today, and especially to those who are the professed people of God, their error, show them where they have deviated from God's Word, where their course is not in harmony with the Golden Rule, etc. Moreover, if they have favorable opportunity, they might point out to the Jews the reasons why they are in their present cast-off condition. But it would not be well to go about berating them, or berating anybody.

Very little good is done by such a course. The Truth itself is to be the Sword. It is a sharp two-edged Sword, even the Word of God. The work that any of us could do aside from the Word of God would be but bungling work; whereas "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." We are to "cry aloud, and spare not," to point out what the Scriptures have to say--on proper occasions. This does not mean to insult people. God's ambassadors have no commission to insult any one. But with gracious words we may, nevertheless, point to the conditions of today, the dangers that are now before the world, and the proper position to be taken by those who would wholly follow the Lord.

A FORM OF GODLINESS WITHOUT ITS POWER

The words of the text under consideration are along the same line as the words of the Prophet `Isaiah` in `Chapter 29:13`, quoted by our Lord. There the Prophet declares: "This people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me"; "but," as the Master rendered the following words (`Matthew 15:9`), "in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

The translation of `V. 2` of our text is not quite so clear as perhaps might be. The thought seems to be: They **apparently** seek Me daily, **apparently** delight to know My ways. They build churches with high steeples and gorgeous appointments, at great cost. Many churches have imposing images of the saints or great paintings which make a fine outward appearance. They have rich, melodious bells chiming out sweet hymns; such as "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "Rock of Ages," etc. They have well-trained choirs to sing anthems. They have highly educated ministers who are gifted orators and deliver eloquent dissertations. Outwardly, they have a wonderful zeal for righteousness; it would seem on the surface that they are doing well. They appoint an annual Thanksgiving

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Day and take up large collections for the poor; they pay large salaries to their preachers; they raise money for missions. It is very much as it was in our Lord's day, at His First Advent, when He said, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of Gehenna than yourselves"; he is far worse than before they touched him.--`Matthew 23:15`.

There is great zeal shown for the traditions of men, for the propagation of men's theories, for the advancement of denominational interests, for attracting the world by varied and numerous devices, in order to gain their influence and their financial assistance. For instance, Thanksgiving Day was set apart in the early history of New England. Long ago it became a custom in the United

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States to have the last Thursday in November appointed as a day of thanksgiving to God for the harvest of the year. The Governor of the State of Massachusetts first took it up; then the Governor of another State followed; then another; then it was taken up by the President of the United States. Finally it became the custom for the President first to make the appointment every year, to be followed by a proclamation by each of the State Governors, making the day thus a legal holiday, when banks and places of business generally would be closed that the people might be free to meet for praise and thanksgiving to God for the blessings of the year. And the custom still persists. Now this might sound to people of other nations to whom it would be told as if the people of the United States were a set of saints. These nations might say, It was not sufficient that the general Government of the United States should make such appointment, but each State makes such appointment; and they do it every year.

As a matter of fact, if the President of the United States were an infidel he would be expected to follow the custom and make the same proclamation. Or whether the Governor of a State were a Catholic or a Protestant or an atheist, he would be expected to do likewise. It has become a custom, just as the hands of a clock go around. But very few of the people think of the day in any other light than as a pleasant holiday, when they can enjoy a fine dinner and have a good time generally. Very little attention--in fact, none--is paid by the great

majority to the real feature, of **thanksgiving to God.**

It is the same with other customs in other nations of the world. If we were in a Mohammedan country, we would see, at twelve o'clock, every Mohammedan, no matter what he was doing, stop immediately for a moment of prayer to Allah. One who did not know might think from this that the Mohammedans were a most saintly people, who would be very honest and upright in all their dealings; better keep your eye open, for all that. So a great deal that we have everywhere today is a mere mechanical form, an outward display--a form of godliness without its power.

PATENT FACTS IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY

In our text the Prophet was declaring that God's true children should lift up their voice and cry aloud, and tell God's professed people their transgressions. The implication seems to be that there is a very special need of public expression on the matter of calling attention to the fact that there is a great deal of hypocrisy practised in the name of religion. If we consider the British people, or the Russians or the Germans, they all have very strict religious laws. They used to be even more strict-- so strict that we who proclaim Present Truth would not have been permitted to live there; so strict that we would have been in danger of our lives. Yet how many of the people of these countries really serve God and follow the instructions of His Word as given to the children of the Lord? Which of these governments in its dealings with other nations has followed or is now following the Golden Rule taught by the Savior? What does history, past and present, show along this line?

It is not now considered necessary or proper to cry aloud in the streets--the public are no longer ignorant. All these things of which we speak are criticized in the newspapers and elsewhere. As to religious intolerance, nearly all

denominations have done their share in persecuting others. But it does not seem that there is any more heart-loyalty today than formerly, even though violent persecution is now seldom practised. If we have the right conception of the matter, only about one-tenth of all the ministers have any faith in the Bible as the Word of God. If that is the case, they are simply living on a high moral plane, though we do not know that this is true of ministers any more than of the world in general. But there is a great deal of religious formality. Those one hundred and eighty thousand ministers still take their texts from the Bible, as they formerly did, but they merely sanction those features of the Divine Revelation which they think comport well with Higher Criticism and general intelligence. It would seem that the Lord through the Prophet is referring to these conditions.

We do not understand that we should cry out in any unseemly manner--not go to the churches and cry aloud. Those in the churches have a legal right to meet there, and to be as honest as they please or as hypocritical as they please. Neither would it be seemly to go along the streets crying aloud. There is a more fitting and effective way of sounding the alarm.

As a notable instance of the present attitude of the nominal church ministry, we cite the case of the Rev. Dr. Aked. Our mention of this is not a divulging of any private matter; for Dr. Aked took it out of the personal list himself, by publishing the matter in the newspapers. Not long ago this minister disproved to his own satisfaction the virgin-birth of our Lord Jesus and made light of the whole matter. Rev. Mr. Aked is a very able man-- stands high with the people and with the colleges and with the ministers. There is a branch of the Federation of the Christian Churches in San Francisco, and the Rev. Mr. Aked was chosen as President. Some one attacked Rev. Mr. Aked through the newspapers and said that he should be "churched," "unfrocked," etc., for his statements. Dr. Aked said that he thought everybody understood his position.

He offered his resignation as President of the Federation of Churches. The man who thought that he should be called to account for his statements was treated as the offender, and Rev. Aked was requested to resume the presidency. Yet this minister publicly declared that he did not believe one word of the story of the Redemption of mankind--did not believe that Jesus was **ever** a superhuman being; and the fact that he was supported in his position by his fellow-ministers, with but very few exceptions, proves that the body of the ministry today have sadly fallen, and are "blind leaders of the blind."

KINGDOM WORK THIS SIDE THE VEIL

We are not surprised at these conditions; for long ago they were foretold in the Word of God. We were assured that our day would witness the fulfilment of the prophecies along these lines. Wherever we look, we witness the disintegration of the Present Order, whether we view the conditions from a social or a religious or a financial standpoint. The lease of power to the kingdoms of this world has expired. It was foretold by the Prophet Daniel that "in the days of these kings," before their utter overthrow, the God of Heaven would set up a Kingdom which should smite and break in pieces all the kingdoms of men, the beastly kingdoms of Daniel's dream. When these kingdoms would be given to "the people of the saints of the Most High," they were to "smite them in pieces as a potter's vessel." This intimates that in some sense of the word the Lord will take possession of these before they have been completely overthrown; that some of the kingdoms represented in the Gentile Image will be remaining at that time.

What time, then, is signified by the expression "in the days of these kings," when the Kingdom of God was to be set up in power? To our understanding the first step in the setting up of this Kingdom was the raising of the sleeping saints of the Gospel Age, which we believe was

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in the spring of 1878. Then began the glorification of the Church. The work of setting up the Kingdom has, we understand, been progressing from that date, and is now merely lacking the last members of the Church class. When these shall have taken their places as members of the Church in glory, the Kingdom will be fully set up.

This does not signify that there may not be a part of the Kingdom work begun while some of the members of Christ are still in the flesh. Indeed some Scriptures seem to imply that there will be a Kingdom work done this side the Veil, while a work of still greater magnitude and authority is progressing on the other side of the Veil. We read, "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds." This seems to imply, as we have mentioned before, that there is a special work to be done while these saints still have beds, while they are in a condition of repose--not "tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine," but fully at rest in God's great Plan. The Scripture goes on to say that they have a two-edged sword in their hands--this is the Word of God. They use it as the Sword of the Spirit. This would not be true of them on the other side of the Veil. They would have no use for a sword there. The Scriptures also declare that the high-sounding praises of God are upon their lips. This, too, seems to be applicable to those this side the Veil.

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The final phrase, "to execute the judgments written," would seem to imply that there would be something for the saints on this side of the Veil to do in connection with the execution of the judgments upon the nations. As to just what this means, we have not yet fully learned. But we see nothing here to

conflict with the thought that the Lord's Kingdom may be properly understood to have begun operations and that the present smiting of the nations is under Kingdom control. The fact that some of the members of the Kingdom class are still in the flesh does not militate at all against this thought. We see the kingdoms of this world now being dashed to pieces, and we are expecting to see the process continued until they are completely ground to powder. They shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind shall carry them away. Then shall they be found no more at all.--`Daniel 2:35`.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD SET UP

Because certain important things are to be accomplished, we see that God is permitting what to others might seem to be purely human devilishness. For a wise purpose He permits this reign of lawlessness, this condition which evokes universal odium. Our thought is that we should look for still further evidences day by day that the Gentile Times have ended, and that God's Kingdom has begun its work. We are expecting to see multiplied proofs of the Kingdom power, though the world will not recognize it as such until it is manifested in the flaming fire of Anarchy, which is still further along. The present step is the war of the nations. The next step will be Socialism--an attempted Socialism--among the people. Then the third step, Anarchy, will gradually come on. When this symbolic fire shall prevail, then the world will realize what we are trying to tell them now; namely, that God's Kingdom is taking control, and that these various demonstrations are evidences that our Lord is taking His great power. But the many will not begin to see until the flaming fire is revealed. When we endeavor to tell them now they will not receive it, but they will be thoroughly convinced when they see the destructive fire of Anarchy.

It was merely during the interval between the destruction of the kingdom of Israel and the setting up of the Kingdom of the Heavens that the opportunity

was given to these Gentile kingdoms to see what they could do toward establishing a righteous government on earth. Now the time has come for God's Kingdom to displace them; but they will not **willingly** resign their crowns and scepters; they are in defiance. Therefore force is required to destroy them. Their 2520 years of rule are in the past, and they must now submit to a complete overthrow. We are expecting that the work of their crushing will steadily continue until its full accomplishment. "A short work will the Lord make upon the earth," is the Scriptural declaration.--`Romans 9:28`.

At the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet Messiah was to take unto Himself His great power and reign. That Trumpet is now sounding! "And the nations were angry and Thy wrath is come." (`Revelation 11:18`.) Surely the nations are angry now! They act as if they were bereft of common sense. We see readily enough that the spirit of selfishness has prevailed there right along; but that some hindrance or fear heretofore held them back. But finally, when the Lord's "due time" had come to permit it, they broke through their restraint. The Lord has at this particular time especially to do with the affairs of the nations. And this war was allowed to occur at about the end of the Times of the Gentiles, at the appropriate time when they are to be dashed to pieces with the iron rod of the Iron Rule. (`Psalm 2:6-12`.) It is our judgment that we shall see more of this iron rule and its breaking influence, not only upon the nations, but upon society at large. Now in this great Day of the Lord everything that can be shaken is to be shaken to pieces and shaken out, to the intent that nothing unrighteous or unworthy shall remain. God Himself is doing the shaking.

FINANCIAL SHAKINGS

For our own part we are looking for great shaking in financial matters. There has never before been a war that has shaken the world as this war has done. This effect is largely because of money conditions. The only thing that is

current is gold. Silver was demonetized forty years ago. The results of this we are just feeling now. At the present time stocks, bonds and all other kinds of securities are largely built on **confidence.** As soon as confidence begins to shake, all these securities decline in value. With such a lack of confidence among the people, we can readily see that there is good ground for the bankers to have a great deal of trepidation--"men's hearts failing them for fear."--`Luke 21:25,26`.

Since the beginning of the war there have been bonds and stocks sold as low as thirty per cent. less than those of last July. But the Exchanges did not recognize these sales. Why? They wish to keep the prices up. The banks have their vaults filled with stocks and bonds. If the Government Inspectors should come in to take stock, they would count the stock up at the price of the last sale; and the Government officer's duty would be to say, "You must make this right before you enter into business tomorrow morning." They would reply that they have any amount of securities. But the answer would be, "We do not want securities; we want gold." There is not enough gold in the world to pay the debts. These debts are put into gold bonds. The interest on all the debts is represented by gold bonds. But everybody is going to say, "I do not want bonds or stocks; I want gold."

The business people of today who are feeling the strain most are the wealthy. They have the stocks and bonds, but they have not the gold, the money. If you demanded gold at the banks in exchange for something else, they might give it to you, but unwillingly. Gold

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notes are the same as the gold, because the Treasury must, according to law, have that gold on hand to exchange for them when presented.

This matter is causing trouble, not only in the United States, but down in South America and Central America. They would like to buy goods. And the question comes, "Have you the money? Have you the gold?" "No, we have no gold. Sell to us in the same way you have sold heretofore." "No, no, we cannot do that; something has stopped. We do not know what is the matter." The wheels have stopped, and the people who have their fingers in the way are getting them pinched. There is not enough money; and the very people who destroyed silver money forty years ago are the ones who are now getting pinched.

THE TIME FOR JUDGMENT IS RIPE

We believe that the Times of the Gentiles ended just on time, as shown in Volume II. of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. The hand of Justice is now doing the breaking-- the nations shall be broken as "a potter's vessel." The whole cataclysm of trouble may be upon the world during the next ten months or it may be longer deferred. We believe that the time for the setting up of the Kingdom was on September 21, 1914. At that time, when it was due for our Lord to take up His great power and reign, the nations were already angry. They were at war over a month in advance of the time, because so angry.

The due time for the "wrath" was September 21. We are expecting to see this wrath still more manifest. The nations have been in just this same unloving spirit one toward another for a number of years, but apparently they have been under some forcible restraint. We believe that God's time had not yet come. We wondered, and many people wondered, how their anger could be restrained much longer; much has been written about it in the newspapers. When the Balkan war came, it was because the nations were angry; and it very nearly led to this conflagration. Austria tried to precipitate the trouble at that time, but the German Kaiser held back. Now the restraining hand has been removed. The

time is ripe.

"WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT WE TO BE?"

Seeing that we see all these things with such clearness, and realize what it all means to the Church, how soberly and carefully and faithfully we should live! Never were the words of the Apostle Paul--"Let us watch and be sober"--more applicable than now. Accompanying the momentous events that usher in the New Dispensation are special trials and difficulties, not only to the world, but also to the Church. The Apostle says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." But "as a snare will it come on all them that dwell on the earth." All except the **brethren** will be surprised, disappointed, chagrined, found unprepared and more or less overtaken. But the brethren, because they have been feeding at the Lord's table, and are strong in His might, will not be overtaken unawares. The Apostle urges that because the brethren are "children of the light," "children of the Day," they shall not act as children of the darkness, "children of the night."

In the New Day that is just dawning we shall have the "Reign of Righteousness." We belong to that New Dispensation. While living in the flesh, we are not of the flesh; while living in the world, we are not of the world. Our minds are clarified by the light of the New Day. We are not interested in the things of this world, but in the things of the Lord; and because of our special relationship to the Lord, as His Elect, we are not left in the darkness of the world.

Above all others, then, we should be sober. When the Apostle enjoins, "Be sober," he is not referring to the use of intoxicating liquors; for those who have the Lord's

Spirit, the Lord's mind--the Truth--do not so indulge. Neither would we understand him to mean that we should always go about wearing long faces; for the children of the Light should of all others be happy, cheerful people. But we should be sober in the sense of being of serious mind, thoughtful, not given to frivolity or levity, but earnestly watching our thoughts, our words, our doings, that we may in all things bring honor to our King whose name we bear. We who have our eyes open see what sin is and how the reign of sin is about to culminate. We see God's arrangements; and having entered into a Covenant with God, we surely must be sober, vigilant, realizing the great battle now on between Light and Darkness, between Truth and Error; realizing that faithfulness in this "evil day" will require all the soberness of mind, all the fortitude, that we possess. We shall continually need the wisdom from on High. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (`James 1:5`.) It is only those who are using to the best of their ability the power and the talents already given them who have any right to ask for further wisdom and who are prepared to use more.

THE "CUP" OF THE APOSTATE "WOMAN"

The Scriptures speak of various kinds of intoxication. We can be intoxicated with the spirit of the world. But it would be impossible for true children of the Heavenly King to become thus intoxicated. We have a new wine which the Lord gives, and we should be fully satisfied and not seek the intoxication of the world. Then there is a spiritual intoxication, the spirit of error. All the world are intoxicated with this spirit. All Christendom has been made drunk with the wine which comes from the Golden Cup mentioned in Revelation, which the Apostate Woman has held out for all to drink. This Cup is filled with false

doctrines. These false doctrines were **her** mixture. Thank God! the intoxication of these is passing away, and we are able to see more clearly than ever before. But we see many who are still intoxicated.

The most stupefying potion is the doctrine of eternal torment. It gives people the impression that after they have heard of Christ, have turned from outward sin, and have professed His name, that is all there is to it, and now they should go out and try to induce others to turn from a life of sin. They verily think that there is nothing more to do, not recognizing that there is an important work of grace to be attained in their own hearts, and that they are to be upbuilt in the knowledge of God and in obedience to His will; and that is His will, "even their sanctification." As a consequence of this, many of them are mere babes in Christ; and many more are not even justified to life, having never made a full consecration of themselves.

Many professed Christians of broad mind and of good influence are thoroughly confused with this wine of false doctrine. They are content to give some money to the Church system and to engage in some works of benevolence. It does not occur to them to seek for further knowledge of God or of service for Him. How much these need to be delivered from the enslaving influences which are binding them hand and foot! How glad, how thankful we are that the chains of bondage will soon be broken and the captives all set free! The children of the Light, however, are properly on the watch all the time. They are not influenced by the deluding, false doctrines. We rejoice that the Morning is about to dawn, the time when all will be awakened and see the light as it will then

be streaming from the Sun of Righteousness, risen with healing in His beams.

We who are now awake should be very active and energetic in the service of God; for we have a hundred-fold more opportunities than those of other days--by telegraph, by telephone, by mail and by newspapers, by rapid and convenient train service, through the printed page, etc. This is pre-eminently the time for the Lord's children, "children of the Day," to be sober, vigilant, active. In the presence of so great opportunities, who should not be sober and vigilant.

And we are to **watch.** What should we watch? Pre-eminently we should watch **ourselves,** to keep ourselves from the snares of the present time, which are more insidious and entrapping than ever before, so that we do not endanger our peace with God nor lose our enlightenment. The Adversary is on the watch, and it is necessary that the Lord's people be especially alert and watchful. In the past there was little opportunity for the Lord's people to watch the fulfilments of Scripture; for these fulfilments were far apart. But now is the time for us to watch particularly along this line. The Times of the Gentiles have ended, and the nations are now disintegrating.

There are certain indications that the Lord has a great work for all His people, His watching saints, at the present time. Unless we are on the alert, we might go to sleep. In our Lord's time the disciples were disposed to go to sleep, and to go back to the fishing business, instead of doing the work the Lord had outlined. We should all be fully awake and watching to see what is the duty of the hour and then to be diligent in doing it.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE NEVER BEFORE SO GREAT

There are some of the Lord's children who seem possessed with the idea that "the door is shut," and that there is no further opportunity for service. So they become indolent in regard to the Lord's work. We should lose no time

dreaming that the door is shut! There are people who are seeking the Truth--people who are sitting in darkness. There never was a time like the present. Never have so many people been ready to hear the good Message. In all the forty years of Harvest there have not been such opportunities to proclaim the Truth as now present themselves. The great war and the ominous signs of the times are waking people up, and many are now inquiring. So the Lord's people should be very diligent, doing with their might what their hands find to do.

Business men are greatly troubled. At the present time there are thousands of business men who scarcely get a night's rest. "Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." (`Luke 21:26`.) They do not know what to do. They thought they were secure; for they had large bank accounts and stocks and bonds. Now they say they do not know what these things are worth. "We had some insurance too," they say, "but we do not now know whether the Insurance Companies can pay." Their stocks and bonds are not salable. Their holders are therefore in perplexity. They have not had the security of God's promises, and they have nothing on which to rest. But the Lord's people have the full assurance of His Word that "**all things** shall work together for good to those who love God"--love Him supremely.

Then let all of us whose eyes have been anointed with the "eye-salve" of Present Truth, who are loyal to the Lord, lift up our voices and point the way to those who are bewildered and troubled, who know not which way to go, nor where to seek for comfort, who long for something substantial upon which to rest, when everything seems to be slipping from beneath their feet. Their religious teachers have failed to be true to their commission, and they have been left to grope in darkness. Some of these may be helped by our efforts and led to the "green pastures" and "still waters" of the true Shepherd's Fold, before the dark night is fully upon the world.

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THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."--`**Psalm 34:7**`.

THERE is more or less difficulty associated with all attempts to think about the great Jehovah, His character and His power. The Scriptures seem to indicate that God has used various ways of manifesting His power to His people--to the Jews during the Jewish Age and to the Christian Church during the Gospel Age. We think it would not be an improper thought that the word **angel** may stand for any agency or power, whether animate or inanimate, that God would be pleased to use in connection with service. God could make the wind or the flaming fire His messenger. He could make the great Archangel or an inferior angel His messenger. He could use as His messenger whatever or whomsoever He might choose to invest with the requisite power; just as a representative of these United States, going to another country, would be recognized, regardless of his own personal ability or standing.

The details of how the Almighty has knowledge of our prayers, our thoughts, our words, our needs, are not furnished us in the Scriptures; and evidently it is not necessary, therefore, that we should understand these in every particular. We do not think that any finite mind could comprehend God. He is too great for our comprehension, far too mighty for us to understand fully all His powers, His ability. Nevertheless we can apprehend some things respecting God, and are therefore invited in the Scriptures to study Him along the lines of His Revelation. To assume that God is in every place, in every niche of space

throughout the Universe, seems to us an absurdity, not taught in the Bible; and to assume that God knows about every little tadpole, pollywog, microbe, or that He even

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takes knowledge of every act of each one of the human family, when there are millions upon millions of these, is beyond our understanding.

If we should limit God's attention to the Church, still there are thousands of these; and the capacity to understand and deal with ten or twenty thousand people in an instant seems to us to be an impossibility. Nor would such an arrangement be what we would expect God to have. Any human being who would attempt to deal with even a hundred people and to know everything going on would be thought to be very unwise. Rather he would have various agencies through which his will would be done by those hundred people by which he would know what was being done, and by which they would know his purpose respecting the work. His general knowledge of matters would not imply that he would be in every room in the house at one instant nor take notice of every person at the same instant.

In our present text, however, we are inclined to think that the word "angel" used by the Psalmist refers to spirit beings. Our reason for thinking so is that the revelations

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of the Lord in olden times previous to Pentecost were nearly all by spirit beings. These materialized and then dematerialized, vanishing from sight. In general the Scriptures seem to indicate that God's dealing with His people in

those earlier times was through angels. As respects this Gospel Age, just closing, we have confidence that God has shown as great care in His dealings with Spiritual Israel as He did with Natural Israel; for Spiritual Israel comes nearer to Him as His House of Sons than did Natural Israel as a House of Servants. But God expects the House of Sons to walk by faith and not by sight, a much higher walk. Hence His manifestations to these are not such as appeal to the natural senses. They are, nevertheless, just as real.

THE EYES OF THE LORD

We read that "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him"; also, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." But this does not give us the thought that God personally beholds every individual act of every person on earth, but that He takes cognizance of matters throughout the world by means of His power, His agencies. These "eyes" referred to are the Lord's influence, His power of **knowing,** whatever the means. Whether His power is exercised and His will executed through angels or through other forces and agencies, it makes no difference--no more than it would with us in carrying out our wishes. If we wished to know about certain matters in Philadelphia, there would be various methods by which we could learn. One effective method would be to telephone and get into direct communication with the individual, provided he is supplied with a telephone. Or through the telegraph we could send a message; or we could send a messenger directly to the party, by foot or by train or some other conveyance.

Now if mankind have these various ways of accomplishing their designs, we can appreciate our Heavenly Father more by thinking of Him as having full ability to come into communication with His children, and as having various agents of communication. God has means, no doubt, far superior to any of

ours. He has not revealed the matter clearly to us except to tell us that He is informed respecting all that concerns us, as well as respecting all the affairs of the world. He does tell us that angels are His ministers, and that these have a charge over His people. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" They do not minister in the sense of directly providing bread for us, nor in the sense of cooking our food, nor of building our houses--in none of these ways do they minister. How, then, do they serve us? We have no way of knowing positively how they serve except from the words of our Lord Jesus, that the angels of God's "little ones" always behold the face of the Father, always have access to Him.

The fact that these angels represent the Lord's "little ones" would imply that they would have immediate access to God and have immediate attention. What would be the use of the Father's receiving the angels into His presence unless there was something to be communicated? Our understanding is that God's knowledge of our affairs and interests is gained by methods with which we are not acquainted. We may assume, however, that the mediums used are largely the angelic messengers. The head of every business house and banking institution has certain laws, certain regulations, governing all the operations of the business. Just so God has certain laws governing nature. It is not necessary that we pray to God that the earth may turn around upon its axis and that tomorrow may come. We may be sure that the Almighty, the One who represents exact Justice and infinite Wisdom, has laws that govern His entire Universe; that the angels have insight into these laws; and that they are Jehovah's deputies, just as an earthly court might deputize some one to sit in chancery and to take information.

OUR LORD JESUS THE CHIEF MESSENGER

If in connection with our text we also have in mind our Lord's words before

His ascension, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the Age," we shall understand that the Lord Jesus is the Chief Messenger, or Angel, of Jehovah. He has surely been the Chief Messenger to the Gospel Church. Our thought, then, is that through the angels and other agencies God is governing the world, and especially caring for His people, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of all the Divine spiritual powers and has charge of all Jehovah's affairs. We have been brought into the School of Christ. He is our Teacher. When we go to the Father in prayer, we do not ignore this Teacher, but we go in His name; and we are not to suppose that the Father would ignore Him. He would be the Father's Representative in dealing with us. But we are not to suppose that the Lord Jesus has every detail of the affairs of the world under His personal supervision; but rather that those angels report to Him whatever is necessary, and that thus there are certain principles operating. This seems to us to be the reasonable and logical arrangement of Divine operations. We are not insisting upon this for other minds, but merely saying that this appeals to our own mind.

In view of the fact that the Church has been put under the special guidance of the Lord Jesus, it would not be a far-fetched thought that Jehovah encampeth round about His people through Jesus, and that the angels are under His direction. If Satan is the chief of his band of angels, so our Lord would have angels under His control, and He would be their Prince. We read of what Alexander the Great accomplished, and of what Napoleon Bonaparte did, regardless of the fact that they had many thousands under them to carry out their will. So we think of all the spirit beings as under the direction and guidance of Jesus Christ. Into His hands God has committed all power in Heaven and on earth. All the angels of God were made subject to Him; and through these, under the control of our Lord, all the interests of God's people are supervised. This is our thought, and we like to think so.

DELIVERANCE IN VARIOUS WAYS

Our text proceeds to say that the angel that encamps around the people of the Lord "delivereth them." In olden times the Lord's children were sometimes delivered miraculously. Some were delivered from prison; others were not. Some were delivered from the sword; others were not. We should accept the will of God, whatever it may be. But in order to be able to do this, for our spiritual good, our ultimate good, we must realize that the terms and conditions under which we accepted of Him were that we would give ourselves unreservedly into His hands. A proper fear, or reverence, for the Lord, would surely lead us to place ourselves fully in His keeping and under His guidance and control. Our experiences in life have shown us how unable we are to direct ourselves aright. The Lord will deliver each of us in the way that will bring us the largest measure of blessing.

In the days of the Apostles, St. Peter was delivered from prison by an angel of the Lord, who appeared to him as a man. This was in the interest, not only of the

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Apostle, but of the entire Church, showing them that the Lord was able to fully care for His people, giving them valuable lessons. And although these outward manifestations are not given to us of the present time, we have other blessings that more than compensate for these outward tokens that are not at present for the good of the Church. We are able to say with the Apostle that all things are working together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose. We should be full of confidence in Him--that we are subjects of His choicest care at all times.

EACH SAINT HAS HIS MINISTERING ANGEL

While we may not be too positive in our interpretation on this subject, we understand that each one of the Lord's people, in proportion as he is one of God's true children, has a ministering spirit, a person, an angel, who has charge of his affairs. This angel makes his report to the Lord, whether monthly, weekly or hourly we do not know. If God sees this to be the wise, proper course, we have every confidence in His Wisdom. Whatever God has arranged is fully satisfactory to us in this matter, and we are sure that it is quite right and fully in harmony with the Divine character.

We think that this principle is illustrated in the Book of the Prophet Daniel. Daniel had been praying and after some little time his prayer was answered. The angel Gabriel, who was the Lord's messenger to Daniel, explained

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to him certain things. At the beginning of his supplications the Lord had purposed to send him an answer. Gabriel had been sent especially to inform him, but had been detained by certain other duties. The fact of his detention should not give us the thought that Daniel or any of the Lord's people would ever be neglected; but that while minor affairs of Daniel were under the guidance of some lower angel, there were important matters that were entrusted to Gabriel as the plenipotentiary, as it were, in regard to Daniel's interest and other matters. There was a delay, and Gabriel mentioned what the delay was; the prince of Persia had withstood him for twenty-one days.

We have heretofore pointed out that this Gospel Age has been different from the Jewish Age and preceding ages; that after the Gospel Dispensation was ushered in, outward demonstrations, such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit--the

gift of healing, the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and discerning of spirits--and angelic visitations passed away; and that during the Gospel Age it has been God's will that the Spiritual House of Israel should walk by faith and not by sight, and that therefore it would be inappropriate after the Church was fully established to expect angels to appear, to manifest themselves outwardly.

But the angels of the Lord, nevertheless, have a charge more particularly over us of the Gospel Church than over any other of the Lord's people at any previous time in the world's history. The Lord is especially interested in Spiritual Israel. These angels, then, care for us, supervise our affairs, and are God's agencies or channels of communication to us as to His will; that is, communication in the sense of providences for us, causing **this** providence or the **other** providence.

HOLY ANGELS NOT MANIFEST TO OUR SENSES

We would not give the thought of the angels whispering into our ears. We think that the angels which now whisper in the ear are the same ones that give table-tippings, planchette communications, communications through the hand by writing, and various other communications to the ear and the eye of spirit-mediums; namely, evil spirits, fallen angels. Our understanding is that the holy angels do nothing of the kind. The Lord's people of the present Age are to find their instruction in His Word. There is no need of a book on Mormonism or Spiritism or New Thought or of clairvoyant or clairaudient power for the Lord's children. These are all snares of the Adversary and his demons.

The followers of Christ have the Bible and the invisible ministries of the holy angels to provide for their interests and to providentially guard and guide their affairs. This, to us, is very real and of great comfort. If we had the thought that

God was doing all this personally, we would think that He had certainly forgotten **us.** But having the assurance of His Word that not a hair of our heads can fall to the ground without our Father's attention, our mind can rest in the fact that He accomplishes His purposes in Christ for His children through the ministrations of the holy angels.

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PREFERRED MONARCHY TO REPUBLIC

--MARCH 7.--`1 SAMUEL 8-10`.--

ISRAEL A THEOCRACY--HUMANLY A REPUBLIC--A KINGDOM PREFERRED--SAMUEL OFFENDED--THE REQUEST GRANTED--

SAUL, SON OF KISH--HIS ANOINTING--CHOSEN BY LOT.

"Fear God, honor the king."--`1 Peter 2:17`.

ISRAEL'S government was a theocracy; that is to say, God was their King; His Law was their government. The elders of each tribe supervised its affairs. God provided a priestly tribe, which represented the religious interests of the people. Prophets and Judges were sent them from time to time as special messengers of the Lord, but without authority except as the people believed their counsels to be wise. Thus Israel was, so far as its earthly interests were concerned, a republic, in covenant relationship with God.

No one will dispute that a republic is the highest type of government. In a

republic each citizen is a sovereign; and these sovereigns, by their votes, appoint some of their number to be their representatives and servants. But this highest type of government can be thoroughly appreciated only by intelligent people, and can work the highest good only in the hands of intelligent and conscientious people, submitted to the Divine regulations.

Had no fall occurred, undoubtedly this highest form of human government would have prevailed. The Scriptures indicate that after Messiah's Kingdom shall have thoroughly subjugated sin, thoroughly uplifted humanity, absolutely destroyed all the wilfully wicked, and shall have completely brought the remainder of the race up to absolute perfection, then, at the close of Messiah's Reign, the earth to all eternity will be a republic, each member of the race a sovereign.

Our lesson shows us that the Israelites did not appreciate their Divinely arranged republic. They beheld the splendor of the surrounding nations, and thought that because they were different, it was to their disadvantage.

As a result of the noble reform instituted by Samuel and maintained throughout his long judgeship, the people were greatly blessed, and the national spirit was strengthened.

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But they perceived that the Prophet was growing old, and they feared that his sons would seek to succeed and continue themselves as judges. The narrative tells that they were unreliable--"walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and perverted judgment."

A NATIONAL STEP BACKWARD

The elders of the tribes conferred together and believed that it would be better to choose from amongst themselves a king and thus become more like the nations roundabout. They came to Samuel with the matter, as children to a father, as wise men to a statesman of extraordinary wisdom. They told him their desires. Samuel was disappointed, but gave no answer to them until he had time to confer with the Lord. The Lord bade him not be offended--that it had not been he who was rejected, but that the Lord had been rejected and His government.

But the Lord was willing to let them have their experiences with kings; nevertheless, Samuel was instructed to fully inform them what would be the consequences, what would be the manners of the kings, what would be the difficulties. He explained that their liberties would be fewer--that the kings would exercise a more or less autocratic power and would conscript their sons for servants and for soldiers and for public works, and that thus their liberties would be greatly abridged, the wealth of the people would more or less flow into the coffers of the king, and the best of their lands and of everything would gradually pass into his control. Instead of being the sovereigns, the people would be the slaves of the sovereign, retaining at best only a portion of their rights, etc.

The people, however, had set their heart on having a king. Already they were imagining how a king would lead them forth and give them dignity, marshal their hosts, and cause fear of them in the hearts of their enemies.

DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE ILLUSTRATED

At the appointed time, Samuel, apparently by Divine arrangement, having received instructions from the Lord, came in contact with the one who was to

be the future king--Saul, the son of Kish. The story reminds some of witchcraft and other occult doings. A herd of asses strayed from the farm of Kish, and Saul was sent to seek them. After searching in vain, he and his servant called upon the Prophet to ask his wisdom--that the Seer tell them where the asses were. The answer was that the asses were found, but that Saul was to come and dine with the Prophet in an appointed place where guests had already been invited, food already prepared, etc.

The place of honor was given to Saul; and the young man, fresh from the country, was astounded to hear the Prophet speak of him as being the choice of Israel for their leader. He modestly called attention to the fact that he belonged to an inferior tribe--a small one--the tribe of Benjamin; and that his family was not even the greatest in it. But the Prophet persisted, addressing him as the one to have future honors.

The next morning he was called early and directed respecting his journey in such a manner that he would have corroborations of things that the Prophet intimated in advance. He would meet certain people, and by some he would be invited to partake of food, etc. Moreover, he would meet with certain experiences which would make of him a changed man. Meantime, as the two walked together and Saul's servant went before, the Prophet drew forth a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, anointing him to be the king of Israel by Divine appointment. However, matters were kept secret until such time as would be indicated.

Saul's faith in the Prophet's declaration was strengthened by the fulfilment of the very experiences foretold. Meeting a company of those who were styled a school of prophets, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul and he joined with them in their singing and prophesying. We read, "God gave Saul another heart, and the Spirit of God came upon Saul, and he prophesied."--`1 Sam. 10:9,10`.

DIFFERENT OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We are to remember that the Spirit of God signifies simply an invisible power from God. Those coming under this power sometimes acted in one way and sometimes in another--sometimes speaking, sometimes writing, as they were moved by the Power of the Holy One, Jehovah. Let us not forget the clean-cut distinction which the Bible makes between the Holy Spirit in its operations upon men before Pentecost and since. Since Pentecost, the impartation of the Holy Spirit generally signifies that begetting influence which the Lord gives to consecrated believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, by which begetting and anointing they are brought into the family of God as sons, and are enabled to have discernment of mind to more and more appreciate the mind of God as expressed in the Bible, by the Prophets of the past.

But previously, the Holy Spirit simply signified a holy energy, and meant no begetting to sonship; for, as the Scriptures declare, the Holy Spirit (in this sense) was not given until Jesus was glorified. (`John 7:39`.) Only saintly persons, fully consecrated to God and fully trusting in the merit of Jesus, are spirit-begotten now, but any person might at times be used of the Lord as an amanuensis to write, or as a servant to do or to say, wherever, whenever, whatever, the Lord wished to have said, done or written.

The Spirit which came upon Saul was not the Spirit of sonship; the change of his heart did not signify that he had become a New Creature in Christ; for there could be none such until Christ, the Head of the Church, had come and, as the Forerunner of His members, had opened up "the new and living way." Saul had a new heart in the sense that he no longer had the mind, purpose, "disposition," to be a farmer, but a Divine "disposition," will, ambition, judgment and wisdom granted him, especially qualifying him to the office to which God had

chosen him; namely, to be a statesman.

In other words, God's Holy Spirit, qualifying Saul for his position as a king, was a mechanical one, much after the same manner that we read that God qualified certain workmen in preparing the Tabernacle. The Lord said to Moses, Choose any workmen for this particular work, and I will put My Spirit upon them, and thus qualify them for the work to be done. We may be sure that if God calls any man for any particular work, He is quite able to qualify him for its performance, whether it be a religious work, as is sometimes given to His consecrated people, or whether it be for some work of public benefit, as for instance, in modern inventions, which belong in this dawning time of the New Dispensation.

EVIL OCCULT POWERS IN OPERATION

The difference between Samuel and his occult powers, and the occult powers of others today is this: Samuel's were manifested under Divine direction at a time when God was pleased to use such powers amongst His people Israel--powers which doubtless will be in exercise also to some extent during the Millennial Age for the world's guidance. But the Scriptures recognize evil occult influences; and the Israelites were warned against necromancers, those who claimed to have communion with the dead, and those that peeped and muttered and had mediumship, etc.

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The Bible explains that the fallen angels personate the dead. The Bible tells that the dead are really dead, that the dead know nothing whatever until the resurrection. The Lord warned Israel that these evil spirits would seek to personate the dead, and thus to indoctrinate them in error and lead them away

from God. Similarly, throughout this Gospel Age, the same evil spirits, the same fallen angels, have used, and do still use more or less of occult power--psychic powers, mediumistic powers, mesmeric powers, hypnotic powers--to mislead, to attract away from the Truth, to make error appear to be Truth--especially to make people believe their dead friends are not dead, but more alive than before they died.

During this Gospel Age, we believe that God does not use such hypnotic powers, but as St. Paul declares, He has "spoken to us through His Son," and has given us His Scriptures, "that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work"--not needing any occult powers. Hence we know of no good occult powers, but are to rate them all as deceptions of the Adversary, against which God's people are fighting.

ISRAEL'S FIRST KING CHOSEN

In due time, in harmony with the will of the Judges of Israel and with the Divine consent, the people came together to Samuel to have the matter of a king amongst them decided--to have the will of the Lord expressed in the matter. Again Samuel expostulated with them, and told them the dangers of leaving the simplicity of God's arrangement and taking up with the monarchial arrangement. But seeing that they still desired a king, he acted for them and drew lots as respected the different tribes, and then the different families in the chosen tribe, and then the different members of the family indicated. The lot fell on Saul as Samuel knew it would do and as Saul also knew; for they believed the Lord's hand was in the matter.

The fact that they used this method of casting lots should not be considered as an endorsement of such a method today; for we are living under different institutions; and neither the Natural nor the Spiritual Israelites are in that

relationship with God in which He proposes to guide their affairs by the casting of lots.

When the lot fell upon Saul, the elders of the various tribes began to look for him. Where is he? Finally they found him bashfully sitting amongst the stuff--the luggage that belonged to the parties that had come to the gathering. As he was brought forth, the young man in the prime of life--probably seven feet tall, of athletic build-- he exactly filled the ideal of the people. They were pleased with God's choice, and God had already qualified Saul that he might be a successful king if he would prove loyal, faithful and obedient to Him.

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT

--MARCH 14.--`1 SAMUEL 11:1-15`.--

KING SAUL, ALTHOUGH ANOINTED OF GOD, WAITED FOR THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE--HIS OPPORTUNE MOMENT AND HOW HE UTILIZED IT--HIS ACCEPTANCE BY THE PEOPLE-- OPPORTUNITIES OPEN FOR ALL--LESSONS FOR ALL IN SAUL'S EXPERIENCES--SPECIAL LESSONS TO THE CHURCH, ALSO CALLED TO KINGLY OFFICE--THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD--ALL MEN TO BE MADE KINGS AGAIN BY MESSIAH'S REIGN-- ALL LOVERS OF INIQUITY TO BE DESTROYED.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."--`**Proverbs 16:32**`.

ISRAEL had asked for a king. God, through the Prophet Samuel, had caused the anointing of Saul to be the king. The people of Israel had assembled, and God's Prophet Samuel had indicated God's choice for them. Some of the people had gladly accepted the choice; but the rougher element had refused it, sneeringly saying, Who is he? What is his record, that we should hope for anything great in his hand?

It looked as though the Lord and His plan had failed --as though the choice had been an unsatisfactory one and had come to naught. Saul made no attempt to exercise authority, seeing that he had such half-hearted support from the people. He returned to his home--resuming his life as a farmer; but we may be sure he was patiently waiting for the opportune, or psychological, moment to arrive when, with God's blessing, he would enter upon the duties and responsibilities of a king, for which he had been Divinely anointed.

Saul's farm life continued only a month, until the opportunity offered which brought him the support of all the people as king. The Ammonites, residing in the east of Israel's possessions, were making war on one of the tribes of Israel. For some time they had besieged Jabesh-gilead, until the city was in such straits for food, etc., that they asked terms for surrender. The taunt of the Ammonite general was that on one condition he would save their lives; namely, they should each submit to having one eye put out, as a shame on the whole people of Israel.

Time was asked--seven days--for decision. If they could not get help in that time, they would submit to the terms. Messengers were dispatched, possibly to all the tribes. At all events some came to the place where Saul resided, evidently hoping that the one who had been chosen king, acceptable to some, would take steps for their deliverance. The disgrace of the situation struck

home to Saul's heart. Israel to whom God had promised the possession of the land and His assistance, lacked faith and leadership.

Saul was appointed leader, and the psychological moment for him to lead had come. He killed the yoke of oxen he had been driving and sent pieces to all the tribes, saying that whoever did not respond, to become a defender of the general interests and to wipe out the shame, would have his oxen hewn to pieces. This was a peculiar command for a king; but it seems to have touched the right spot, for three hundred and thirty thousand men responded. The messengers returned to Jabesh-gilead with assurances of succor before noon the next day; and they gave answer to their besiegers to the effect that they would by the time appointed march out for the Ammonites to do with them as they thought best--meantime expecting such a deliverance as would make their enemies impotent to harm them.

King Saul divided his army into three sections, and from three different quarters came suddenly upon the besieging hosts, routing them, destroying many lives and delivering the people of Israel. Thereupon the masses of the Israelites realized that God had indeed given them a wise king, whom they had been slow to recognize; and they inquired for those who had spoken against Saul at first, saying, Let them now be slain. However, the king was wise and generous, and said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day; for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel."--`Verse 13`.

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THE DIVINE CHARACTER VINDICATED

We again remind our readers that although this war and the slaughtering of those Ammonites had the Divine approval and blessing, it did not signify what

many of us once supposed; namely, that those thousands of Ammonites slaughtered in their sleep or in their waking moments, went immediately to the theological Hell, there to suffer eternal torments. On the contrary, they merely went to the great prison-house of death, the tomb, there to sleep until in God's arrangement Christ would die as the world's Redeemer--and more, until at His Second Advent the Redeemer should take His great Power and reign, begin His work of calling back from death all that are in their graves.--`John 5:28,29`. See Revised Version.

To grasp the situation we must remember that all men are under a death-sentence, conviction, not worthy of life everlasting. All were to die anyway; and it mattered little whether they would die from starvation or sickness or pestilence or by the sword. The penalty merely reads, "Dying, thou shalt die"--not live, anyhow or anywhere. This view of matters has a distinct bearing on everything appertaining to the Lord's authorization of wars, and permission of famines, sickness, etc. While God has enforced the penalty, "The wages of sin is death," and has thus manifested His justice, He in another way has been preparing for the manifestation of His Love. The first step of this love-manifestation was in the sending of His Son to be man's Redeemer--to die for Adam's sin, under which all the race is condemned to death.

Still the Divine Plan is hidden from the world in general. Only the Lord's consecrated people may have a clear understanding through the Bible of God's great purposes of love for the race. These are informed, and are able to comprehend the Message, that ultimately God will establish a Kingdom which will bind Satan's power,

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release humanity from its mental, moral and physical weaknesses--the results

of the curse--and restore all the obedient to full perfection and to relationship with God.

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT ALL

Looking out into the world, we perceive that opportunities for progress and greatness are by no means equal. Nevertheless, few men and few women make use of all the golden opportunities which do come to them for their own betterment and for usefulness on their part to their fellows. All such may take a good lesson from Saul; for he had naturally some good traits which he subsequently diverted or misused.

That Saul had humility is evidenced by the fact that when the suggestion of his becoming king was made, he repudiated the thought of his worthiness of the position, saying that there were greater tribes than the one of which he was a member, and that even in his own tribe, his family was not the most prominent. Again, at the time when Samuel the Prophet called the people, that the Lord's lot might be determined as to who should be the king, Saul was in hiding amongst the stuff, sitting amongst the piles of baggage. He knew how the Lord's lot would fall; and it was to his credit that he was not strutting about amongst the people showing himself, and saying, The Lord would surely choose me. Again, when some of the people murmured that he was not acceptable, Saul quietly went to his home and to his farming, letting the matter rest. Thus he displayed patience and wisdom, as well as humility.

His subsequent action and leading the army of Israel showed his faith in God and his courage. Had Saul maintained these characteristics, his experiences later would have been very different. But nearly every young man and young woman on the threshold of life, as well as when older, can gain some valuable and lasting lessons from Saul's experiences.

It may surprise some when we say that Christians-- God's consecrated people--may especially learn lessons of profit from Saul's experiences. They, like Saul, have been nominated of God, not only to be kings, but also to be priests, "a Royal Priesthood." As Saul was anointed with the oil, so the Royal Priesthood are anointed with the Holy Spirit. As the people rejected Saul, and he waited patiently for the Lord's time, so the people, mankind, are not yet ready for the Reign of the Royal Priesthood, of which Jesus is the Head; and God's time has not yet come for the establishment of the Kingdom. Lessons of patience, of humility and of confidence in God are requisite that after enduring, they might inherit the promises.--`Hebrews 6:12`.

The great Armageddon is at hand, and terrible lessons will be learned by the world at great cost. Thereafter the Kingdom of Messiah will be very popular; and they will be saying, as they did in Saul's case, Let all those who oppose be put to death. However, The glorified Christ-- Jesus the Head, the Church His members--will be very gracious, and a general amnesty will be proclaimed for all who will desire to come in line with the Kingdom.

Not only those who persecuted the Savior will be forgiven and be assisted back into harmony with God through Him, but those, also, who have despised the Royal Priesthood and persecuted them unwittingly, will be mercifully dealt with. "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, The Lord be glorified: [We do it for the good of the cause] but He shall appear for your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

The shame that will then come upon all who in the meantime had resisted the Lord's choice for His Kingdom class will be a sufficient penalty. After the shame and God's forgiveness to all the willing and obedient, The Christ will bring blessings of "Restitution, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the

holy Prophets since the world began."--`Acts 3:21`.

A WORLD FULL OF KINGS

God created Father Adam the king of earth. Had he remained loyal to his God, he would have retained not only his life and health and happiness, but also his kingly authority over the beasts, the fish and the fowl--ruling them with telepathic powers. The breaking of the Covenant with God by Adam not only brought death and separation from God, but impaired his ruling powers as respects the lower creatures. The redemption accomplished by the death of Jesus is eventually to reach every member of Adam's race, and not merely will be applicable to their restoration to human perfection of mind and body, but will include a restoration of kingly powers.

In a republic there is a recognition of the fact of a human equality before the law. In a republic, every man is a king; and these kings vote for one of their number to be a president-king, or otherwise to hold a government executive position as the servant of all. This is a theory, an ideal, but we all know that it is more or less defective. It is in vain to claim that all men are born free and equal when we know that there are great inequalities of birth, of character, of talent, of will-power. While, therefore, a republic would be the ideal condition for perfect men, it only partially meets the requirements of the case so long as man is imperfect.

Nor will Messiah's Kingdom be established as a republic. Instead of giving humanity more power and leaving everything to be settled by the popular will and

vote, Messiah's Kingdom will do the reverse. It will lay down the law, punish every infraction of the law, and point men to the fact that they are not qualified to govern themselves, and that therefore, God has decreed the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom to rule over humanity, while they are in the imperfect condition, and to bring them up by Restitution to full perfection, where they will be able, as originally designed, to all be kings; or, failing to come up to this standard, they will be destroyed as incorrigible, lovers of iniquity.

Surely the Divine Program for humanity is beautiful, simple, and sublimely grand! It leaves nothing to be desired further. As the Bible declares, it will be "the desire of all nations." Those whose eyes and ears of understanding are open to appreciate this Message of the Bible have much advantage every way over the average man at the present time. This knowledge is very assistful to them as they come to realize that the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon them is with a view to preparing them to be the Royal Priesthood of the future and, with Jesus, to bring to mankind the blessings of Jehovah, lost by sin, redeemed at Calvary.

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LESSONS FROM SAUL'S FAILURES

--MARCH 21.--`1 SAMUEL 14:1-46`.--

OBEDIENCE WITHOUT ITS SPIRIT CAUSED SAUL'S DIFFICULTIES--THE KINGDOM, TAKEN FROM SAUL'S FAMILY, GIVEN TO DAVID, "A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART"--SAUL PROFITED PARTIALLY BY HIS MISTAKES AND WAS BLESSED ACCORDINGLY-- LESSONS FOR

EVERYBODY--PARTICULARLY FOR GOD'S CONSECRATED PEOPLE.

"Let us put on the armor of light."--`**Romans 13:12**`.

THE army which gathered to Saul, and which accomplished the victory of our last Study, was disbanded; and subsequently the king had a standing army of three thousand men. One thousand of these were under command of his son Jonathan. The remainder constituted a royal guard and were immediately under Saul's own directions. Apparently the land of Israel was completely dominated by the Philistines, who here and there had garrisons. These were content to take a certain amount of tax from the people, much as the British govern India.

The Israelites were poorly armed; for the Philistines would not permit them to have weapons of war lest they should rebel. Similarly, the British prevent war munitions from going to India for the same reason. When therefore Jonathan made an attack upon the garrison of the Philistines and wiped it out, it raised a hubbub, much as such a circumstance would do if the people of India were to rise against the British garrison there. It meant war. The Hebrews trembled at what might be the result, just as the people of India would tremble at what the British might do in a similar case.

The Philistines increased their army of occupation; and the Israelites--unarmed, except with agricultural implements, etc.--were terrorized by the warlike Philistines. Saul's army of three thousand dwindled to six hundred; yet the word which reached him from the Prophet Samuel was, to wait seven days for his arrival, apparently with the intention that the people should thoroughly feel their impotence, and cry unto the Lord for succor. King Saul did as directed to the extent of waiting seven days; and with the expiration of the time, seeing how his army was dwindling and that Samuel had not returned, he on the seventh day undertook to be his own priest. He offered up sacrifices to God

without authority.

Just as he had finished the sacrifices, the Prophet Samuel appeared, reproved him sharply, and told him that because of his failure to fully obey the Lord, his family should not be continued as the Lord's representatives in the Kingdom of Israel. The king apologized, explained the circumstances--thought it necessary to do something, and that what he did was the only thing he could think of. Very few kings or generals of our day would be prepared to do any nearer the will of the Lord than did King Saul. Very few would have waited seven days at all, or would have paid any attention to the Prophet. Very few would have apologized to the Prophet afterwards, and explained why they attempted to offer sacrifice to God.

We cannot but think that if King Saul had been given further opportunities he might gradually have learned the lesson of implicit obedience to God; and yet our next lesson will show us that he again failed along the very same lines. It requires many experiences to teach some of us the lesson of complete reliance on the Lord and full obedience to His every requirement. Perhaps the Lord was wishing to teach a special lesson along this line--that any king sitting upon the typical throne of the Lord must be implicitly obedient, not merely to the letter of the command, but also to its spirit; for Israel's kings to a considerable extent foreshadowed the Kingdom of Christ and His Church. Those who will be joint-heirs with Messiah in His Kingdom of glory must learn obedience; else they will not be accounted worthy of the honors of the Kingdom. They must not only be outwardly obedient, but inwardly obedient to the spirit or intent of the Lord's Law.

ONLY PRIESTS MIGHT SACRIFICE

While passing, we do well to note why King Saul's sacrifice of burnt offerings

to the Lord was condemned as a sin. This was because God had made a specific law to the effect that only the priests might offer sacrifices. Then comes the question, Why should God limit the offering of sacrifices to the priestly tribe? The answer is that that tribe typically represented the Church--fully consecrated to God and accepted by Him. These the Apostle styled the antitypes, not only of Israel's kings, but also of Israel's priests. St. Peter says of the Church in general, and not of the clergy in particular, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood."

In the antitype, all of God's consecrated people are prospective kings and are sacrificing priests. Unless these saintly Christians sacrifice their earthly interests, their present lives, they will not get the great reward of joint-heirship with Christ, the great Chief Priest of their profession. As we read, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him"; and again, St. Paul says, "I beseech you, brethren,...present your bodies a living sacrifice."

It would be therefore a mistake for us to suppose, as some do, that the clergy have special priestly offices now, and are commissioned to offer mass and prayers. Let us remember that there is only one great High Priest--the Lord Jesus--that He offered up Himself in the days of His flesh, and has passed beyond the Veil into glory, and that He has since been offering up His consecrated people, who present themselves to Him in the proper spirit of submission and self-sacrifice.

The Bible recognizes no division of the people of God into clergy and laity. This was a snare of the Adversary, introduced gradually in the third and fourth centuries. The Bible teaching is that all spirit-begotten children of

God are members of the antitypical Royal Priesthood, that they are all brethren, that they are all ordained or authorized to preach the Message of God's grace as presented in God's Word; and that they should call no man on the earth father; but should realize that One is their Father, even God, and that the Lord Jesus is their Elder Brother.

CRAVING FOR ANOTHER CHANCE

How many of the human family have felt, when they reached their death-beds, that if they had life to live over again, their lessons of experience would be precious and enable them to do much better! The man or the woman who has not had some experiences along this line of failures and endeavored to surmount them and to do better, has lived his life very much in vain. Let us therefore encourage one another to strive for high ideals, and not to be discouraged by our unintentional failures. This is expressed by the little quotation which we all learned in childhood, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." That little message which came to our childish minds was a valuable one. It helped us over many a discouragement.

Beset by our own weaknesses with which we were born, surrounded by others who similarly have weaknesses of mind, body and morals, and assaulted, as the Scriptures assure us we are, by Satan and the fallen angels, who seek to ensnare us and divert us from God and from righteousness, is it any wonder that we fail to come up to our own highest ideals, and therefore fail still more seriously to come up to the perfect standards of God's Word?

The very simplest statement of God's Law is the Golden Rule. Yet how many who understand that Golden Rule and its spirit perfectly could claim that they live up to its requirements every hour, every day? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all

thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." All that any of us can do is to be honest with ourselves, to confess our delinquencies, to strive daily to overcome these and to attain more and more to the Divine standards in thought, in word, in deed.

It is a further lesson, which only Christians have learned, that it is impossible to live up to the standards of this Law, and that we need the covering of the Redeemer's merit--even after we have surrendered all to Him to seek to walk in His steps--to cover our shortcomings and to continue us in relationship with God. Another lesson which the Christian learns is that those continuing in relationship with God find not only forgiveness for trespasses unintentionally committed, but find also grace to help, assistances for every need--through the same Savior.

Thus the Christian is learning of his own weaknesses and of God's mercy, and growing strong in battling for the right day by day. He not only has a second chance, but has many repeated chances, day by day, of repentance of sin and of making a fresh start after recovery from the stumbling, through the merit of Christ.

King Saul in our lesson had no such experiences; the Savior had not yet died; He had not yet appeared in the presence of God, to offer an atonement or to open up a new way of life. Saul, therefore, had only the arrangement which was common to all Jews--the typical Day of Atonement, once every year, to atone for the sins of the whole people for one year, including the typical priesthood, through whom the message of God was communicated to them. And being himself partly a type, King Saul was necessarily dealt with along the lines of strict justice, and

the kingdom was declared to be forfeited by his family because of his offering to the Lord a sacrifice not authorized.

THE WORLD IN THE FUTURE

Gradually Bible students are learning that the story of our various creeds of Christendom is untrue, which tells that all the heathen have gone to eternal torture, and all the Jews similarly, because they did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and furthermore, that nearly all the people of civilized lands who have died, have gone to eternal torture because, having heard of Christ, they did not become His saintly followers. These terrible doctrines have driven many away from God and from His Book, as people seem to realize their horrors and injustice.

Bible students are coming to see that God has provided two trials for the whole world of mankind. The first trial was in Eden, Father Adam being the representative of himself and his race. That trial ended in disaster to all concerned. Unless God had made an arrangement for a second trial, none of the human family would ever gain eternal life or escape the sentence that came on them there. The death of Christ was for the very purpose of giving a second trial to Adam and all his race; as the Apostle declares, "As by man came death, by man comes also the Resurrection of the dead. For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive; every man in his own order."--`1 Corinthians 15:21-23`.

During this Gospel Age, those who believe the Message of the Gospel, and who consecrate themselves fully to the Lord and whom He accepts by the begetting of the Holy Spirit--these become New Creatures in Christ, and these New Creatures are on trial a second time--their destiny being either everlasting

life on the spirit plane or everlasting death. The remainder of the world are still in the condemned condition; or, as the Apostle says, they have not yet escaped the condemnation that is on the world. There is only the one way of escape now--through accepting Christ on the terms of discipleship.

However, we see that God's provision for a second trial includes the remainder of mankind who do not now hear, or who do not now accept Christ and are not now begotten again as New Creatures. The world in general is to have its trial time during the Millennium. Then, "the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth." Then, "all shall know Him from the least to the greatest." They will not have the opposition of Satan; for he will be bound during that time. They will have the assistance of Christ and of the glorified Church, the Royal Priesthood.

The object of that Millennial Kingdom will be to uplift the world--to bring all the willing and obedient back again to human perfection and everlasting life, and to destroy all the incorrigible ones, who refuse when they have that full and second opportunity. In this connection we are reminded of the words of the poet:

"I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning-again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door
And never put on again."

The poet's words are to come true, and the time is near at hand. If, as Bible students are realizing, the present European War is a prelude to the anarchy of the great Battle of Armageddon, and is the vestibule to the Kingdom of

Messiah, then the time of putting off the "shabby old coat" of present imperfection on the part of mankind in general is near at hand. Surely all who have themselves put off the filthy rags of their own righteousness, and by faith put on the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, can rejoice that the poor world--heathen, Jew, and civilized Gentiles--may all have so good an opportunity as God's

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love and mercy have provided for them through the great Sacrifice made at Calvary, when "Jesus Christ by the grace of God, tasted death for every man"; that he who believeth on Him, whether now or in the future, should not perish, but might gain everlasting life.

Not only so, but as Jesus gives all who come unto Him the gracious opportunity whereby they may "try, try again," and gradually demonstrate, cultivate their loyalty to God and to righteousness, so the Bible intimates an opportunity will be given to the world in general. For a thousand years the world will have the opportunity of trying, trying again, peradventure that by the many lessons of that time they may learn righteousness and come fully into accord with the Great King Eternal and His glorious Golden Rule. This the Scriptures assure us respecting the Millennium: "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."--`Isaiah 26:9`.

JONATHAN'S FAITH WAS REWARDED

Our lesson proceeds to tell the story of how Jonathan and his armor-bearer, blessed of the Lord, were victorious over the enemies; and how the Philistines, divided into three parties, mistook each other for Hebrews and slaughtered one

another.

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"THE TONE OF VOICE"

"It is not so much what you say
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use,
As the tones in which you convey it.

"'Come here!' I sharply said,
And baby cowered and wept;
'Come here,' I cooed, and he looked and smiled
And straight to my lap he crept.

"The words may be mild and fair,
And the tones may pierce like a dart;
The words may be soft as summer air,
And the tones may break the heart.

"For words but come from the mind,
And grow by study and art,
But the tones leap forth from the inner self
And reveal the state of the heart.

"Whether you know it or not,
Whether you mean or care,

Gentleness, kindness, love and hate,
Envy and anger are there.

"Then, would you quarrels avoid,
And in peace and love rejoice,
Keep anger not only out of your words,
But keep it out of your voice."

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INTERESTING LETTERS

"NOTHING LEFT BUT TIME FOR PRAYER"

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:--

The year must not pass without a word from us to cheer and encourage you and to wish you God's choicest blessing on your every word, thought and deed, which go forth to His glory.

At this juncture we have just closed a long session of many weeks of the PHOTO-DRAMA. The experience has been trying, but helpful, because it has shown us that the Apostle's admonition is still needed--"Ye have need of patience," and we find we are still in need of extreme watchfulness in points of character which we were beginning to think were nearly invulnerable.

We are glad indeed now that so many thousands by means of the PHOTO-DRAMA have been brought into direct touch with the Truth--a pure message--

and especially at a time when the clergy (who should be feeding and comforting their sheep) are positively impotent and have no message to give. On the other hand many of them--the majority, in fact--are preaching war and urging the use of carnal weapons as the highest ideal for young and old.

The attendance at the PHOTO-DRAMA during recent weeks has been phenomenal, and many are the encomiums received concerning it. We feel it a duty to speak of Brother Shearn in this connection, because his energies have been continuous day and night. In every case he has schemed successfully on the side of economy, and has overcome obstacles in cases where many an able man would have given up the fight.

Indefatigable is the best word in our language we can find for him, and that is not expressive enough. He has kept us going at full steam while the work was on; and it was indeed, as the hymn says, "Nothing left but time for prayer." The wonderful and unselfish co-operation of an army of brethren shows what the Truth can do; and the unanimity among them has been sufficiently marked to impress the visitors, who in their turn have expressed delight and admiration at such service.

We have slowed down now and are glad of a little respite; and though we do not expect to be able to put in so much time to the DRAMA if it continues, we hope to do our best.

Yours in the dear Lord, F. GUARD.--**England.**

THE TRACT STILL DOING GOOD

DEAR BRETHREN:--

Greetings in Jesus' precious name. Just a few lines to inform you of things in general up here. In February last year I received a tract from a brother dealing on Scripture. It appealed to me so much that I became a Bible student, and my wife as well. Before that I was a Roman Catholic, and my wife belonged to the Church of England; it is needless to say that there were religious disagreements which were not binding us together. On the other hand, now, we are pulling together in spite of the very hard and especially trying times. My sister-in-law is also a Bible student, having gotten the start from us.

Since last February, I am glad to say, there are several of my neighbors interested in Scripture, and I am in hope of some becoming like us.

One of my methods is to write down some pointed Scripture texts and ask my neighbors what they think of them. As they have to look up the Bible for these, they get interested. hence, I refer them to the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Now, brethren, I am isolated here and cannot go up to Edmonton to take part in the class, because I am a farmer and cannot be away from home long enough. If any of the brethren are on their way through this section, my house will be always welcome to them if they want to stop a day with me to discuss Bible topics.

With my best wishes, I remain,

Your brother in the service of the Lord, C. R. BANNISTER.

NOW AN UNBROKEN FAMILY

OUR DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER IN CHRIST:--

My heart is full to overflowing, and I must tell you of the great blessings I received at Providence, and what it did for Brother Kies.

As he belonged to the M.E.Church, lived as near right as possible--was a worker, etc.--he thought he was a Christian, but now he says, "Why, I never was a Christian; for I never acknowledged I was a sinner, and never took Jesus for my personal Savior." So your theme, "What is a Christian?" struck him very favorably and gave him a foundation to start on.

Then at the afternoon meeting he got the Plan; and in the evening at Boston he found out what and how to do when you are a Christian. Oh, it became so plain to him; and he says he wouldn't take a thousand dollars for what he got!

I am a babe in Christ also, and symbolized my consecration Nov. 2, in Springfield, Mass., and have been trying to let my light shine; and he says he has noticed it and has been watching me; and that when you spoke of that in Boston it just hit him.

Oh, what it has done for us both, praise His name! He expects to withdraw from the Methodist Church and give his reason and testimony how he got "truly converted." We are **all** rejoicing, and Brother and Sister Merrill say, "Now we are an unbroken family." And oh, I am so happy!

I could hardly give him up, but now he is given back to me; you can imagine my joy.

Yours in the one blessed hope,
SR. CLARENCE KIES.

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International Bible Students Association Classes

STUDIES AND LECTURES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION